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ens. There stood the fixed stars and the ever recurring figures of the sky. In these everlasting shapes and symbols an alphabet was afforded. The stars became to them signs, and by means of them the mysteries of heaven's disclosing are syllabled forth. Using the constellations as points upon which they might suspend the vision of things hidden and the map of the future, the skies became to the patriarchs an outspread picture-book, full of deep significance. Here there is a theory which one might consider with more of readiness. How the teachings of the fathers, handed down from generation to generation, might in time become corrupted, how after the dispersion of Babel the dim meanings placed of old in the stars might grow among the scattered nations fainter and fainter and yet not be wholly lost, all this is subject of legitimate conjecture. At its best this method of communicating wisdom and aspiration would be cumbersome and unreliable; men certainly made no progress under it. The world was grown desperately wicked. Then, whatever the origin of their lore, in the very bewilderment of their iniquity, there came the people of God, and with them the communing again of God with man. With them came the new and better revelation. To them was committed the Book. With them were prophets, priests, and kings of God's ordaining. They had new and wondrous knowledge poured out upon them. In their providential leadings, in the luminous rites of the altar, in the shining proclamations of the prophets, they were taught unutterable things. And now what cared they for the traditions of the stars! God had spoken to them. The thoughts of their pious forefathers, let us suppose, they with pains make out from the stellar legends, but what were such vague gleanings to the knowledge of the very heart of Jehovah granted them in their inspired record? And when they saw their brethren led away by those same contemplations, and worshipping the created rather than the Creator, no wonder they shut their eyes to the so-called mysteries of the skies. They forgot the stars. They magnified him who made the stars.

—The April number of the *Quarterly Statement* of the English Palestine Exploration Fund contains the particulars of Lieut. Conder's latest explorations. He has found among the numerous stone circles, dolmens, and menhirs already known to exist East of the Jordan, four undoubted great centers, round which the monuments are disposed. These are at Mushibiyeh, at El Mareighêt, at Minyeh—all three south of Hesbân—and in the Ghor, near Kefrein. The first of these Capt. Conder identifies with Bamoth Baal; the second with Baal Peor; the third with the top of Baal Peor, "that looketh toward Jeshimon"; the fourth with the sanctuary of Baal Peor, in the Jordan valley, where the Israelites worshiped while in Shittim. Capt. Conder also claims to have found that a building already seen and described by several travelers, at Ammân, is of Sassanian character, which seems to connect it with the curious ruin discovered by Tristram at Mashito. He has also discovered near the city rock-cut tombs, presumably those of the ancient Ammonites, but ruder in character than those commonly found in Western Palestine. The citadel of Ammân he considers to be late Roman work. He has discovered at Arak el Emir, the great palace of Hyrcunus, the method of conveying the immense stones, some of them twenty feet long and ten feet high, from the quarry to their destination. At Jerusalem he has explored the tunnel of Siloam and discovered the place where the workmen met, and he has obtained a cast and made a reading of the now famous Phœnician inscription.—*Independent*, May 18.

SPIRIT OF THE MOSAIC SONGS.

BY
Rev. O. P. BESTOR, A. M.

The question of authorship of the Mosaic songs lies on the border-land of our field of view. It will be assumed that the claim to genuineness is well founded. These songs are eight in number and may be classed in four divisions: three war songs, three devotional, one benediction on the tribes, and one brief outburst of surprise bordering upon indignation. In addition to the ninetyeth psalm which bears the superscription, "A prayer of Moses, the Man of God," there are others in the fourth book of the Psalter, e. g., XCI—XCIV. and also CIV., that are ancient in their ground-work and abound in historic allusions drawn from the writings and times of Moses, so that they might almost be regarded as belonging to this subject.

Some of these songs of Moses appear upon their very face to be in perfect harmony with the spirit of the New Testament, while others, and especially the war songs, appear to grate harshly upon the ear in this nineteenth century of the Christian era. These three war songs include the one sung after the safe passage of the Red sea, resulting in the overthrow of Pharaoh and his warrior hosts (Ex. xv. 1-9), the fragment of a war song against Amalek (Ex. xvii. 16), and the fragment of the war song against Sihon and Heshbon recorded in the "book of the wars of Jehovah" (Num. xxi. 27-30). In the early days, when these songs were written, historic events were preserved and rendered vivid by the parallels, and rhythm and cadence of song. War was the only appeal of nations, and victory meant the utter subjugation of the vanquished, even to the proscription of religion, the sundering of family ties, the selling of the captives into slavery, the ravishing of purity, the infliction of the most revolting cruelties with no hope of redress save by another appeal to arms. It was therefore the spontaneous outburst of grateful hearts to join in a song of praise to their deliverer when Israel beheld their enemies overwhelmed in the sea,—that enemy who would have dragged them back from promised freedom into a galling bondage. As the forces of Amalek were subdued Israel burst forth again (this translation is taken from Smith's Bible Dictionary):

"As the hand is on the throne of Jehovah
So will Jehovah war with Amalek
From generation to generation."

One has well said: "If the bloody character of this statute seems to be at variance with the mild and merciful character of God, the reasons are to be sought for in the deep and implacable vengeance they meditated against Israel." When Israel met with refusal to the fair proposition to pass through the domain of Sihon, king of the Amorites, and took forcible possession of the territory wrested by Sihon from the king of Moab, they took up the proverbial song of conquest that the Amorites sang, and followed it with one of their own, exposing the impotence of the usurers and showing the brevity of the triumph of the wicked:

"Come into Heshbon—let the city of Sihon be built and prepared:
For there is a fire gone out of Heshbon,—a flame from the city of Sihon:

It hath consumed Ar of Moab,—and the lords of the high places of Arnon.”

Thus had the Amorites celebrated their triumphs, and Israel added :

“Woe to thee, Moab! thou art undone, O people of Chemosh : He hath given his sons that escaped,—and his daughters, into captivity,

Unto Sihon, king of the Amorites.—We have shot at them ; Heshbon is perished even unto Dibon,

And we have laid them waste even unto Nophah,—which reacheth unto Madeba.”

Whatever may be said of the form in which these three war songs are written, they are the grateful recognition of the Divine hand in the success of Israel, and the joyous expression of praise to God for their own deliverance from their foes even to the sacrifice of thousands of lives. There is implanted in man the sense of justice, which, however perverted in popular uprisings and summary dealings with criminals, can be satisfied only by the visitation of retribution upon brutal and impenitent outlaws. All we can therefore hold the author of these war songs responsible for, is the grasp he had upon the truths and principles involved, with their application to the times, the habits, the characters and the civilization of the people contemporary with himself, and the foresight he possessed of the influence of the triumph of either party upon religion and the future history of the world. It would be unjust to hold Moses responsible for the existence of the institutions, relations and customs in existence, which gave occasion for the visitation of the peculiar form of suffering and death upon Israel's foes as a just retribution for their opposition to the government and purpose of God. If we bear in mind these principles we can enter as heartily into the sentiment and spirit of Moses' war songs as we do into that of our own national airs, born of the exposure and suffering and blood of thousands of our fellow-citizens, and celebrating the sanguinary defeat of the enemies of our country. A history turning the tide of civilization, establishing the principles of liberty, blessing the world with courage and hope, and turning the hearts of generations heavenward renders in any age the mingling of acclamations of triumph with religious songs of worship perfectly justifiable and consistent.

The apologetic form of discussion required in treating the war songs is not needed in the discussion of the others in which the devotional spirit prevails. On the Mount as Moses meets Joshua and hears the swelling notes of revelry from the camp of Israel bowing before the golden calf, he exclaims (Ex. xxxii. 18) :

“Not the voice of them that shout for mastery,
Nor the voice of them that cry for being overcome,
But the noise of them that sing do I hear.”

Here surprise at the sudden apostasy of which he had been informed by the Lord, mingled with righteous indignation at the insult offered to him whose hand had been conspicuous in their previous deliverance, finds its natural expression in the poetic form.

The people thirsted for water at Beer, the princes turned up the soil, the water bubbled up from the living springs, when they burst forth in grateful song (Num. xxi. 17, 18) :

“Spring up, O well ; sing ye unto it ;

The princes digged the well, the nobles of the people digged it, By the direction of the lawgiver with their staves.

“This beautiful little song,” says one, “was in accordance with the wants and feelings of traveling caravans in the East, where water is an occasion both of prayer and thanksgiving.” Thus we have natural spontaneity and beauty mingled together in the grateful song of the early people of God. The parting benediction upon the tribes in Deut. xxxiii. is the expression of deep interest and solicitude for their future and an inspired prophecy of their history. The beginning recounts the events at Sinai, while the conclusion celebrates the character of their God as worthy of their adoration. The retrospective song of Moses' life (Deut. xxxii. 1-43) covers the whole range of God's dealings, both miraculous and providential, and with the heavens and the earth invoked as witnesses celebrates in the spirit of thanksgiving and praise his loving kindness and forgiving mercy even though like a pampered animal, instead of becoming docile under gentle treatment, “Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked” against the authority and restraint of his divine benefactor. Of this song it has been said, “The magnificence of the exordium, the grandeur of the theme, the frequent and sudden transitions, the elevated train of the sentiments and language, entitle this song to be ranked amongst the noblest specimens of poetry to be found in the Scriptures,” and we may safely add, to be found in any language.

As we open our Bibles to the ninetyeth Psalm, we are deeply impressed with the adaptation of its truths and spirit, as though but yesterday it came leaping forth from the heart of our dearest friend to lead us to the highest and noblest conception of God, and strengthen us to bear up under our burdens with patient fortitude and courageous faith, with the consciousness that the all-seeing eye of the eternal and infinite God is upon us, each individually, as through the ages he directs the course of events; now startling the world with the results of the work of a day, and now giving occasion for his enemies to become bold and defiant by his delay for a thousand years to accomplish what his people have been praying for and laboring to secure. Into the very dwelling place of God he leads us to interpret the mysteries of providence and punishment, of old age and life work. In distress and sorrow, in decrepitude and death these words have afforded a healing and consoling balm to crushed and bleeding hearts, akin to the melodious notes of the Gospel of Peace.

As we take a survey of the fields of view covered by these songs, we are filled with surprise that in that far off epoch a mind and heart were so united by the Divine Spirit as to grasp in its spiritual grandeur the monotheistic conception of Jehovah as God, eternal, unchangeable and omnipotent in his being, his sovereignty and his purpose, a faithful Father, a wise Ruler, so guiding the providential unfoldings of history as to secure the final triumph of the right as espoused and maintained by his people, and elicit the voluntary recognition of his rightful authority from the whole creation. That such a conception of God should have had a powerful influence in moulding individual and national life and character was a natural consequence, and hence religion became a matter of every day life and practical application to its intricate relationships and duties

inspiring the human heart with courage and hope. Even after the lapse of thirty-three centuries the child of God finds his faith and hope wrapped up in Moses' closing words of benediction upon the tribes:

"There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun who rideth upon the heaven in thy help and in his excellency on the sky, The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms;

And he shall thrust out the enemy before thee; and shall say Destroy them,

Israel thou shalt dwell in safety alone

The fountain of Jacob shall be upon a land of corn and wine;

Also his heavens shall drop down dew,

Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord.

The shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency!

And thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee;

And thou shalt tread upon their high places."

These songs of Moses, beginning with that of victory and salvation of Israel at the Red Sea, blend harmoniously with that of the angels near Bethlehem's ancient site:

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

This blending harmony but prefigures the thrilling anthem of the redeemed who are represented by John as singing the song of Moses and the Lamb.

THE NEW TESTAMENT IN HEBREW DRESS.*

BY
DR. B. FELSENTHAL.

Although we cannot recognize any scientific significance whatever in Delitzsch's translation of the New Testament, and although we are able to see in it nothing else than a missionary document, yet we will make prominent the fact that the translation taken as a whole is a very successful one. Not only each word-form but each daghesh and each vowel-sign has been well weighed, with care and grammatical scrupulousness. The translator, rightly, has not striven after an Old Testament purism, but he has endeavored to acquire the speech [*Sprachfarbe*] of the New Testament period, the mishna character of its phraseology. (Cf., e. g. גוף Matt. xxvi. 26; צלב ib. xxvii. 22; צריך Mar. xi. 3; ראו Luk vii. 4; כרי ib. vii. 6; הזכים לנהול ib. xx. 35; גבי הסנה ib. xx. 37; הכריכין Jno. xx. 5; בפרט 3 Jno. i. 5 sqq.) For this reason also, it cannot be thought strange if here and there words borrowed from the Greek should occur (e. g. פרחסא Jno. x. 24; נליסקמא ib. xii. 6; ריתיקי Heb. ix. 17; etc.)

In some places, so it appears to us, the translator has not hit upon the right word. We take, for example, the word *logos*; which appears in the New Testament more than 300 times. So far as we can ascertain by a short comparison, Delitzsch has almost everywhere rendered it by the Hebrew דבר. (In Luke xx. 26, we found for it מאמר.) Now let one read the first verse in the Gospel of St. John. How unhebraic does the verse read: את האלהים היה הדבר בראשית היה והדבר היה! Scarcely could any one who possesses anything of a Hebrew sensibility of the language understand this Hebrew verse in the sense of the original, if the Johannean doctrine of the Logos had not already been made known to him. What? Should the Hebrew דבר be used for the Greek *logos*? To

be sure *dabhar* occurs frequently enough in the Old Testament in the sense of *word*. But when the Hebrew Bible speaks of the unclean *dabhar* which is touched (Lev. v. 2), it means *a thing* and not a word. And when it discourses about the *dabhar* which is tried in the fire (Num. xxxi. 23), it discourses about *a thing* and not a word. And when it mentions a *dabhar* which bears marks (Deut. xxii. 20), it means also *a thing* and in no case a word. And so we find sufficient proof that in the course of time the signification of *dabhar* extended and transformed itself. At the time of the Apostles according to all probability it was used in the sense of *stuff* or *substance*. At all events we find it with this meaning in the Hebraic literature. And hence an interesting chapter in the history of the Hebrew language may be illustrated by the word דבר. How light would the Christian and Jewish scholastics of the middle ages have found their labor, as they sought to bring into harmony the biblical account of Creation and the Aristotelian philosophy, if they had had before them the verse הדבר הראשית היה. They could then, have very plainly transferred it. In the beginning was the substance. And what would not Göthe have made out of the *dabhar* if he had had it before him. His Faust does not know whether he shall translate: the word, or the sense, or the power, or the deed. With דבר in the text, the Spinozist Heide would certainly have called out: אלהים היה הדבר, God was the substance.

Without doubt, it was a mistake to set the word דבר in Jno. i. 1. Here, at all events, the right word would be מאמר, corresponding to the Targumistic מימרא. Cf. also the Mishna expression בעשרה מאמדות וגו' (Aboth 5. 1). But many will say for the sake of consistency [*Gleichartigkeit*] *logos* was here also to be translated by דבר. Oh, no! It is an entirely false principle to determine to use always the same word in a translation for a certain word in the original. In different connections, with different authors and in different ages, words take on different shades of meaning; and the translator must always make account of this. In the English New Testament, consequently, the word *logos* is not always translated by the same word. We find it rendered by *thing*, *saying*, *word*, *speech*, etc.

Similarly also *hodos* should not always be translated by דרך. It seems to us that in many places the Mishna הלכה should have the preference; e. g. Jno. xiv. 5, 6 in the words: I am the way, the truth and the life.

Likewise Delitzsch has consistently למלאות וכו' for the common "to fulfil what is written," and here לקיים is so readily suggested. The verb מלא is indeed really found in the Old Testament with the meaning here required (Cf. I Kgs. ii. 27); but on the other hand, in the Bible the verb קום appears much oftener with this meaning; thus in the Piel (Esther ix. 21, 29, 31; Ruth iv. 7; Ezra xiii. 6; Ps. cxix. 106, etc.) and in the Hiphil (Gen. vi. 18; ix. 9; 1 Sam. xv. 17; 2 Kgs. xxiii. 24.) In the Mishna, however, *kayyem* is the commonest word and should be the one to be employed in a Hebrew New Testament.

In a revision of the translation still a few other changes might commend themselves to Prof. Delitzsch and his fellow-laborers.

* Translated by the authors' request, from the German, as it appeared in *Der Zeitgeist*, May 22d.